

SAVING LOCAL JOBS BY IMPROVING PROCESSES

ABOUT ROMER LABS. Romer Labs is a leading global supplier of diagnostic solutions, specializing in food pathogens, mycotoxins, food allergens, gluten, GMO, veterinary drug residues, melamine and enzymatic food analysis. The company operates four fully accredited service labs in Austria, Singapore, UK and the USA. The Newark, Delaware office has approximately 40 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. The production laboratories in Delaware needed to improve efficiency. Romer Labs was manufacturing a test kit for food contamination, and demand for the product had increased in recent years. The company was considering moving production to another facility, but Tim Lawruk, Senior Director of Operations in the Newark office, wanted to keep jobs in Delaware. He learned about the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMPEP), part of the MEP National Network™, through a member of Senator Chris Coons' staff, and decided to reach out for assistance.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. First, DEMPEP facilitated a Principals of Lean Manufacturing workshop for Romer Labs. A group of 15 employees participated in the training, gaining knowledge of concepts they could implement immediately at the Newark site. Next, DEMPEP led Romer Labs employees through a Value Stream Mapping event, identifying key objectives, measures, actions, and priorities in the process. The team created a Future State Map that outlined the optimal production flow, and DEMPEP helped Romer Labs produce a comprehensive action item list to guide the company in achieving its desired future state.

Finally, DEMPEP led a 5S workplace organization event (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain) at the Newark site to improve efficiencies in the lab's output. The event had an enormous impact, and Romer Labs increased productivity so effectively that the company cut cycle time in half. An improved quality control process is producing significant savings in labor and materials, and process flow improvements helped the company double inventory turnover. Romer Labs is keeping jobs in Delaware, and the company expects to triple sales at the Newark site without adding any staff.

"Our work with DEMPEP had a huge impact on how we run our business. It's been visible to all levels of management throughout our organization. It ultimately saved jobs in Delaware."

-Tim Lawruk, Sr. Director of Operations

RESULTS



200% increase in sales expected



Reduced cycle time by 50%



Cost-savings of \$50,000 in labor and materials



Increased inventory turnover by 100%

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